

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 SP-02 INR-05 PA-01 NSCE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NEAE-00 /030 W
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O R 021250Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5264
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 2012

JERUSALEM FOR ATHERTON
LIMDIS
E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, JO, US, XF
SUBJECT: COURT CHIEF SHARAF - AREA REVIEW

SUMMARY: IN REVIEW OF AREA SITUATION, SHARAF INDICATED JORDANIAN AWARENESS OF FACT THAT ANY DECLARATION WILL BE COMPROMISE DOCUMENT AND THAT ISSUE OF "GUIDELINES FOR THE WEST BANK" PROVIDES FURTHER OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP A CONCENSUS. SHARAF INDICATED JORDANIANS UNDERSTAND NEED FOR FLEXIBILITY AND THAT A KEY PROBLEM WILL BE IMPLICATION IN BEGIN PLAN AND IN ISRAELI STATEMENTS THAT NO WITHDRAWAL CAN TAKE PLACE ON WEST BANK AND GAZA. ON SELF-DETERMINATION HE REITERATED THAT JORDAN IS NOT INTERESTED IN ENSURING THAT AN INDEPENDENT STATE EMERGES, BUT THAT PALESTINIANS HAVE TO BE TREATED IN A WAY WHICH WILL NOT STIMULATE IRREDENTISM AND RADICALISM. DIALOGUE WITH PLO RESTARTED BY JORDAN IS DESIGNED TO TRY TO MAKE ORGANIZATION BEGIN TO THINK REALISTICALLY ABOUT A NEGOTIATED PEACE, BUT IT WILL NOT ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING SPECIFIC. SYRIANS ARE STILL PURSUING CONTACTS WITH JORDAN, BUT AMMAN WISHES TO WAIT FOR A LITTLE WHILE BEFORE
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TALKING WITH DAMASCUS. SAUDI RELATIONS ARE IN THE DEEP FREEZE AFTER JORDANIAN PM'S HARSH LETTER; KING PLANS TO GO SEE KHALID AT SOME POINT BUT PROBABLY NOT RIGHT AWAY. A VISIT TO EGYPT IS NEEDED, BUT MUST BE MESSED WITH INVITATIONS FROM LIBYA AND ALGERIA. EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL TALKED TO JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR ABOUT JORDAN PRODUCING MORE CONCRETE IDEAS ON THE WEST BANK SETTLEMENT. SHARAF IS THINKING ABOUT ASKING ATHERTON

TO MAKE A STATEMENT WHILE HERE WHICH WILL INDICATE THAT HIS MISSION IS NOT PURELY LIMITED TO OR FOCUSED SOLELY UPON THE DECLARATION EXERCISE TO GIVE SOME PERSPECTIVE TO PRESENT PROCESS AND REITERATE THAT A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT IS OVERALL OBJECTIVE. END SUMMARY.

1. I SAW SHARAF FOR ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF AT NOON MARCH 2. HE RETURNED FROM LONDON A DAY AGO.

2. WE SPOKE BRIEFLY ABOUT JORDAN'S SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE, ITS SUCCESS AND THE NEXT STEPS WHICH JORDAN SHOULD TAKE.

3. HE THEN ASKED ABOUT SCOPE OF ROY ATHERTON'S MISSION AND ITS OBJECTIVES. I PUT EMPHASIS ON OUR DESIRE FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE SETTLEMENT AND IN THAT CONTEXT ON THE DECLARATION AND PERHAPS SUBSEQUENTLY OR EVEN COTERMINOUS WORK ON GUIDELINES FOR THE WEST BANK. WE THEN DISCUSSED THE AREA SITUATION IN SOME DETAIL AND A NUMBER OF POINTS EMERGED.

4. SHARAF UNDERSTANDS CLEARLY THAT THE DECLARATION WILL BE A DOCUMENT WHICH THOUGH REQUIRED, WILL ONLY PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR NEXT STEPS. HE INDICATED ON TERRITORY, THAT WHILE JORDAN HAS ASKED FOR A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL, IT KNOWS THAT BEGIN IS INSISTING ON NO WITHDRAWAL. A DECLARATION WHICH COVERED WITHDRAWAL ON ALL FRONTS WOULD THEREFORE BE A HELPFUL STEP FORWARD.

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5. RESPECTING SELF DETERMINATION, SHARAF INDICATED THAT JORDAN WAS NOT DESIROUS OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE, BUT THAT PALESTINIANS COULD NOT BE DICTATED TO WITHOUT SOME SEVERE CONSEQUENCES IN TERMS OF RADICALISM AND REVANCHISM IN THE FUTURE. JORDAN WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE WEST BANK WOULD CHOOSE LINKS WITH JORDAN; BEGIN WAS JUST AS CONFIDENT, HE SAID, THAT THEY WOULD CHOOSE AN INDEPENDENT STATE. WE HAD TO AGREE ON THE IDEA OF CHOICE AND THEN TRY TO WORK OUT MORE CONCRETE ARRANGEMENTS.

6. WE DISCUSSED THE KING'S THIRD DESIDERATA - THE NEED TO HAVE THE PALESTINIANS NEGOTIATING ALONGSIDE JORDAN. SHARAF BELIEVES THAT IF BEGIN WILL GIVE A LITTLE ON WITHDRAWAL FROM TERRITORY, JORDAN CAN ENTER AND IF IT DOES SOME RESPECTABLE PALESTINIANS FROM AMONG THE WEST BANKERS CAN BE FOUND TO NEGOTIATE ALONGSIDE OF JORDAN.

7. SHARAF MADE CLEAR THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF FACTORS WILL HAVE TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IF JORDAN DECIDES TO ENTER THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS, BUT THAT THE SUM TOTAL OF IT ALL ADDED UP TO WHETHER OR NOT KING HAD CONFIDENCE THAT THE PROCESS WAS GOING TO GO SOMEWHERE.

8. ON THE DIALOGUE WITH THE PLO, THE NEWS THAT QADDUMI WOULD COME THIS MONTH TO AMMAN WAS FALSE. JORDAN'S INTENTION WAS ONLY TO GET THE PLO TO BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT ITS POSITION AND THE CONSEQUENCES FOR IT OF A NEGOTIATED PEACE. THE PLO WOULD WANT TO RESUME POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN JORDAN AND SEND FIGHTERS OVER TO ISRAEL AND THE WEST BANK BUT THE KING WOULD NEVER PERMIT THIS.

NOTE BY OC/T: LIMDIS CAPTION ADDED PER MS. KENNEDY, S/S-O.

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LIMDIS
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9. WITH RESPECT TO SYRIA, THERE HAD BEEN MORE FEELERS TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND HASSAN IBRAHIM FOR A MEETING. SHARAF SAID KING WOULD LET SYRIANS SIT A WHILE. THEY WERE ALWAYS WILLING TO TRY TO DRUM UP SUPPORT FOR A NEGATIVE STEP, BUT NEVER FOR SOME POSITIVE MOVE. HE CONTRASTED THIS KING'S POSITION WHICH HE ASSERTED (OBVIOUSLY FOR OUR BENEFIT) WAS TRADITIONALLY TO SEE WHAT HE COULD DO POSITIVELY TO ADVANCE THE PEACE PROCESS AND THE ARAB CAUSE. SHARAF THOUGHT THAT THE SYRIANS HAD TONED DOWN THEIR CRITICISM OF JORDAN AND RECENTLY HAD MADE A FEW ALMOST POSITIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE PEACE PROCESS.

10. ON EGYPT, SHARAF MENTIONED THAT KING BELIEVED IT WAS NECESSARY TO CONTINUE TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR SADAT AND EGYPT. HE WAS CONTEMPLATING RENEWED CONTACTS OR A VISIT, BUT THAT IT HAD TO BE MESHERD WITH INVITATIONS WHICH KING HAD OUTSTANDING FROM LIBYA AND ALGERIA. HE ADDED THAT ALGERIANS WERE TRYING TO PROMOTE JORDAN-

PLO DIALOGUE AND TILTING TOWARD SYRIA OVER IRAQ. MOHAMED KAMEL
HAD CALLED IN JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR, BRIEFED HIM ON EGYPTIAN POSITIONS

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AND URGED THAT JORDAN BEGIN THINKING CONCRETELY ABOUT PEACE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WEST BANK. I INDICATED THAT WE HAD ALSO TOUCHED ON THAT POINT IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH KAMEL.

11. REGARDING THE SAUDIS, KING HAD BEEN SENT A LETTER BY KHALID WHICH SHARAF CHARACTERIZED AS FRIENDLY BUT DEVOID OF SUBSTANCE. JORDAN HAD BEEN SENT FUNDS TO PAY ITS FMS DEBTS AS PROMISED BUT VERY LATE. RELATIONS WERE IN A DEEP FREEZE WHERE THEY HAD BEEN PUT BY PRIME MINISTER BADRAN'S HARSH LETTER TO THE SAUDIS. JORDANIANS FELT THE ONLY WAY TO GET THEM REVIVED WAS FOR KING TO MAKE A VISIT, BUT NOT TO TALK ABOUT MONEY. HE WOULD ONLY GO AND DISCUSS THE POLITICAL SITUATION. I ENCOURAGED SHARAF TO THINK ABOUT A VISIT BY THE KING AND SAID I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A VERY GOOD IDEA TO SOFT PEDAL MONEY REQUESTS FOR SOME TIME. HE AGREED. HE SAID THE KING WANTS TO LET THINGS COOL OFF FOR SOMETIME LONGER AND THEN WILL GO. NO DATE HAS BEEN SET.

12. SHARAF AT THE END OF THE TALK INDICATED THAT THE REASON HE WANTED TO EXPLORE WITH ME IN DETAIL THE SCOPE OF ROY ATHERTON'S MISSION WAS THAT HE FELT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF ATHERTON COULD MAKE A STATEMENT WHICH WOULD INDICATE THAT THE DECLARATION WAS NOT THE SOLE AND ONLY PURSUIT INVOLVED. IT COULD BE DONE HERE. I SAID THAT I COULD SEE SOME ADVANTAGE TO DOING IT HERE, PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE GREAT INTEREST IN THE AREA AND ELSEWHERE IN GETTING JORDAN INVOLVED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID IN REPLY THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FROM JORDAN'S POINT OF VIEW TO GET ACROSS THE IDEA THAT THE DECLARATION WOULD NOT BE A MIRACULOUS PRODUCTION, BUT ONLY A NECESSARY STEP ON THE LONG ROAD TO A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE. COMMENT: JORDANIANS OBVIOUSLY WANT TO SOFT PEDAL THE IDEA THAT A DECLARATION IS ALL THAT IS REQUIRED TO GET THEM TO COME INTO THE
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PROCESS. THEY ALSO WANT TO ACCENTUATE THE FACT THAT THE ATHERTON MISSION CAN AND SHOULD CONTINUE BEYOND THE DECLARATION AND THAT ANY DECLARATION WILL PROBABLY FALL WELL SHORT OF THE KIND OF EXPECTATIONS THAT THE ARABS (AND THEY TO A GREAT EXTENT) HAVE BUILT UP. WE CAN ALSO SEE AN ADVANTAGE IN MAKING CLEAR IN AMMAN THAT THE PROCESS IN WHICH ATHERTON IS ENGAGED IS A

CONTINUING ONE DESIGNED TO BE BROADENED BY THE ADDITION OF
OTHER NEGOTIATING PARTIES.

13. GENERAL COMMENT: SHARAF INDICATED A WIDE DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY
PERSONALLY AND A REALISTIC APPRECIATION OF WHAT COULD AND COULD
NOT BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE DECLARATION AND TO SOME EXTENT THE
GUIDELINES EXERCISES. I AM QUITE CERTAIN THAT HE IS CLOSE ENOUGH
TO THE KING AND INFLUENTIAL ENOUGH WITH HIM NOW TO BE REFLECTING
IDEAS HELD BY HUSSEIN. HIS THINKING HAS NOT PROGRESSED MUCH FURTHER
HOWEVER ALONG THE LINES OF WHAT THE ARABS MIGHT BE SPECIFICALLY
INDUCED TO PROPOSE OR SUGGEST IN RESPONSE TO THE BEGIN PLAN.
PICKERING

NOTE BY OC/T: LIMDIS CAPTION ADDED PER MS. KENNEDY, S/S-O.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLICATIONS, WEST BANK, LAND SETTLEMENT, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978AMMAN02012
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780095-1117
Format: TEL
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803117/aaaaduzu.tel
Line Count: 238
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a1ef3dba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3147332
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COURT CHIEF SHARAF - AREA REVIEW SUMMARY: IN REVIEW OF AREA SITUATION, SHARAF INDICATED JORDANIAN AWARENESS OF FACT THAT ANY DECLARATION WILL BE COM
TAGS: PGOV, JO, US, XF
To: STATE JERUSALEM
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a1ef3dba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014